

## PAPER DETAILS

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AUTHORS: Harun Cigdem,Osman Gazi Yildirim,Tolga Erdogan

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## THE ANALYSIS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' INTERNET ADDICTION AND MISCELLANEOUS VARIABLES

Harun Cigdem

Turkish Land Forces Non-Commissioned Officer Vocational College

Osman Gazi Yildirim

Turkish Land Forces Non-Commissioned Officer Vocational College

Tolga Erdogan

Turkish Land Forces Non-Commissioned Officer Vocational College

**Abstract:** The recent inevitable development in information technologies has influenced many aspects of our lives. While internet has eased and speeded up the access to information, enhanced and diversified our communication opportunities, and facilitated our lives in areas like commerce and education, by taking the center place in our lives, it has concurrently raised some unfavorable issues like excessive use and preoccupation. Especially youngsters and university students are vulnerable to adverse effects of internet use; the excessive amount of time they spend on internet has led to neglect of other items in their lives, inefficiency and failure at school and work, and lack of satisfaction with life as a result of isolation and loneliness. Thus, internet addiction well deserves further analysis for the harm it causes on younger generations, specifically. The purpose of this study is to analyze the relationship between internet addictions of students and some miscellaneous variables (social life satisfaction, presence or absence of a girlfriend, school satisfaction etc.). The participants comprised 354 post-secondary students enrolling at a vocational college during the spring semester of 2015-2016 Academic Year. "Internet Addiction Test" was utilized for data compilation. t test was used to examine the differences between variables. The results obtained showed that students with unsatisfactory social life felt relaxed with the increase on internet use, those with a girlfriend had higher addiction levels, and finally students who were not happy at school reported a tendency towards more internet use and eventually neglected their responsibilities and daily work.

**Keywords:** Internet addiction, social life, school satisfaction, vocational college

### Introduction

In the last decade, the Internet has facilitated our lives by making information available everywhere and in any format and creating communication opportunities with different people around the world. On the other hand, it has also caused people to spend so much time using it. Since internet has become the center of people's lives, problematic internet use is a growing social problem already being debated worldwide (Armstrong, Phillips & Sailing, 2000). This behavior has been discussed in various research including "Internet addiction" (Bai, Lin, & Chen, 2001; Young, 1998), "pathological Internet use" (Davis, 2001; Young & Case, 2004), "problematic Internet use" (Davis, Flett, & Besser, 2002; Kaltiala-Heino, Lintonen & Rimpela, 2004), and "Internet dependency" (Wang, 2001).

According to Kim and Davis (2009), internet addiction requires the use of internet be irresistible and it interferes with other major aspects of life (school, work, and relationships etc.). In addition, attempts to control this excessive internet use generally fail. Considering the reasons of excessive internet use, Griffith's (2000) states that compulsive use of Internet is closely correlated with a person's coping style with problems and deficiencies in his/her own life. He identifies the reason for internet addiction as heavy internet users feel better using the

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\*Corresponding author: Ilker Turker-Mail: hcigdem@gmail.com

Internet because they feel free and they take different roles and social identities they desire. As a result, they feel satisfied with this dependent relationship (Young, 1998; Aydın & Sarı, 2011).

Internet addiction also has undesirable effects. According to Cash, Rae, Steel and Winkler (2012), internet addiction devastates lives by creating physiological, psychological and social problems. Various studies have revealed that spending so much time on the Internet leads individuals to lose their sleep (Anderson, 2001; Nalwa & Anand, 2003), and have problems in their social relationships (Kraut et al., 1998; Lin & Tsai, 2002; Young, 1998). Pertaining to students, research show that students who use the Internet excessively prefer online activities to sleep (Anderson, 2001). Furthermore, students even skip classes or exams due to excessive internet use (Chou, 2001; Tsai & Lin, 2003). Other studies also show that dislike for school, depression, anxiety, alienation from peers, unsatisfactory family atmosphere and shyness are highly associated with internet addiction (Huang and Leung, 2009; Wang et al., 2011; Liu, 2007). In current study, we aimed to examine the possible relationship between internet addiction of students and their miscellaneous characteristics (social life satisfaction, presence or absence of a girlfriend, school satisfaction etc.).

## Method

The participants of the study were 354 post-secondary students enrolling at a vocational college during the spring semester of 2015-2016 Academic Year. Prior to conducting the survey, students' informed consent was obtained. Internet Addiction Test (IAT) developed by Young (1998) and adapted to Turkish by Kaya, Delen and Young (2015) was used as data collection tool. This scale involves 20 statements on a 6-point Likert type scale ranging from 0 = less intense behavior to 6 = most intense behavior. The scale is also composed of 4 subscales: Mood, Relationship, Responsibilities and Duration. According to Kaya, Delen and Young (2015), Mood relates to unwanted bad feelings due to uncontrollable internet use; Relationship describes online communication habits; Responsibilities explains how excessive internet use hinders daily life and performance; Duration pertains to time management behaviors. Descriptive statistics and t test were conducted to analyze data. The significance level was set at .05 in all analyses.

## Results and Findings

According to descriptive statistics analysis, 78.5% (N=278) of students were satisfied with their monthly income, while 66.1% (N=234) of students were satisfied with their social contacts and relationships. In addition, 72% (N=255) of students were pleased with their school, while 65% (N=230) of students had no girlfriend.

Multiple independent-samples t tests were conducted to analyze effects of social life satisfaction, presence or absence of a girlfriend and school satisfaction on factors of IAT. According to test results, there was a significant effect for social life satisfaction difference on mood factor;  $t(352) = -2.86$ ,  $p = 0.04$ , with students not pleased with their social life had more intense bad feelings related to uncontrolled internet use than students pleased with their social life. Furthermore, there was a significant effect for presence of a girlfriend on relationship factor;  $t(352) = 2.41$ ,  $p = 0.01$ , with students having girlfriend were in the habit of communicating online more excessively than students not having a girlfriend. As presented in Table 1, analysis results also revealed that school dissatisfaction closely associated with internet addiction in all subscales.

Table 1. t Test results regarding school satisfaction

| Subscales        | Group                     | N   | M    | SD  | t      | p    |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----|------|-----|--------|------|
| Mood             | Satisfied with School     | 255 | 1.61 | .65 | -5.327 | .000 |
|                  | Not Satisfied with School | 99  | 2.04 | .73 |        |      |
| Relationship     | Satisfied with School     | 255 | 2.58 | .82 | -3.979 | .000 |
|                  | Not Satisfied with School | 99  | 2.97 | .85 |        |      |
| Responsibilities | Satisfied with School     | 255 | 1.55 | .71 | -2.084 | .038 |
|                  | Not Satisfied with School | 99  | 1.73 | .75 |        |      |
| Duration         | Satisfied with School     | 255 | 1.84 | .76 | -3.315 | .001 |
|                  | Not Satisfied with School | 99  | 2.15 | .80 |        |      |

## Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to examine relationship between miscellaneous variables and internet addiction of students. Results of the study showed that students who are not pleased with their social life tend to have bad feelings due to their excessive internet use. In addition, students with unsatisfactory social and school

life felt relaxed with the increase on internet use. This finding concurs with those found in other studies where excessive internet use allows people to feel relaxed and compensate some deficiencies in their own life (Griffith, 2000; Young, 1998; Aydın & Sarı, 2011). Results also showed that students with an unsatisfactory school life neglected their responsibilities and daily work because of excessive internet use. This result was also found in other research which state that students become so occupied with using the Internet that they even skip school and exams (Chou, 2001; Tsai & Lin, 2003). Results of current study also revealed that students with a girlfriend had higher addiction levels and they were in the habit of communicating online more intensively.

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